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SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA FY 2010 MISSION STRATEGIC PLAN FEEDBACK

¶1. (SBU) Summary. An April 4, 2008 inter-agency review of post,s 2010 Mission Performance Plan (MSP) complimented post,s excellent, comprehensive assessment of USG relations with Ethiopia. The Chief of Mission statement clearly and thoroughly outlines USG priorities, appropriately according prominence to the strategic relationship in a region that faces many security and development challenges. The Foreign Assistance narrative accurately details our significant assistance programs, although additional information in some areas would help to clarify post's additional assistance requests. The MSP review participants noted post,s program activities had substantially outpaced the administrative resources devoted to supporting them. They supported post,s suggested flexibility in using funds to address democracy and governance objectives. End summary.

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Chief of Mission Statement  
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¶2. (SBU) The Chief of Mission (COM) statement outlines clearly the important strategic relationship the USG has with the Ethiopian government and people, with a focus on our national security interests of counterterrorism and regional stability. There was some interest in elevating the democracy objectives to make them the Mission's highest priority, but post explained that building Ethiopia's capacity to promote peace and security was the most vital USG interest. The COM paper's detailed democracy goals were clear, although participants asked post to clarify whether obstacles to their realization were largely financial or rather related to diplomatic or political constraints. There were no objections to the ranking of the other goal papers.

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Foreign Assistance Priorities  
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¶3. (SBU) The Foreign Assistance Priorities narrative details USG assistance objectives in Ethiopia, with appropriate financing levels to reach them. Several minor corrections to the text are needed, however. As noted in the review, the narrative needs revisions on page 5, second paragraph, to spell out that proper management of the new Presidential Malaria Initiative and the Education Initiative will require more positions rather than more funding. Also, since the Mission,s assistance request is \$10 million above the Control request, language needs to be inserted in the narrative (and in the relevant goal paper(s)) on how post proposes to spend this additional funding.

¶4. (U) The follow recommendations are tied to the draft MSP,s goal papers.

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Goal Paper 1  
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¶5. (SBU) The review concurred with post that regional security concerns will remain paramount in 2010, and that the USG will have more leverage with the GOE in promoting regional security than it is likely to have with the GOE over internal political developments. For this reason, regional stability remained as Post's principal priority. The review also concurred that post does not require additional resources to manage the Eritrea/Ethiopia border conflict or any effort to normalize relations between the two countries. Such efforts are likely to be undertaken, if at all, by the United Nations and/or in capitals.

¶6. (SBU) Participants made the follow comments:

-- RM noted the current MSP draft appears to conflate the GOE,s counter-insurgency campaign in the Ogaden against the ONLF with its counter-terrorism actions against Islamic extremists, and should be revised to make a clear distinction between the two activities, since the USG collaborates closely with the GOE on the latter and not the former.

-- S/CT recommended noting that terrorist groups, including Al-Shabaab, at times operate in parts of Ethiopia,s Ogaden region.

-- PRM indicated the draft would benefit by mentioning that Ethiopia might face significant refugee flows from the region in 2010, given ongoing conflicts in neighboring countries, especially in Sudan and in Somalia.

-- S/CT said the MSP should reference the East Africa Regional Security Initiative (EARSII), and the fact that significant funding (more than \$10 million) is likely to be channeled to EARSII programs in 2010.

-- All participants agreed that public diplomacy ought to be given more emphasis, and that performance indicator #2 appeared to be somewhat vague in its target.

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Goal Paper 2  
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¶7. (U) Goal paper 2 focuses on helping in Ethiopia's progress toward a stable multi-party democracy. DRL agreed that post should have flexibility to use funds originally allocated to promote human rights for democracy and governance goals instead. Both performance indicators #1 and #2 are supposed to be indexed by a MCA performance figure, yet no number was given in the MSP draft. This will require revision.

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Goal Paper 3  
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¶8. (U) Goal paper 3, assisting a growing market-oriented economy, requires no significant changes. However RM recommended an explanation be given as to why the FY 2007 Result figure for the second performance indicator greatly exceeded the FY 2007 Target.

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Goal Paper 4  
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¶9. (U) Goal paper 4 is about investing in people for a healthy, educated population. RM recommended that Performance Indicator 2 be amended to show both the number of students enrolled in schools through USG funding and the number of schools involved.

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Goal Paper 5  
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¶15. (U) On Goal Paper 5, building a management platform that

supports growing Mission needs, participants understood that post's administrative staff had almost quadrupled its workload in the last ten years, without growing in size. They agreed that the growing management burden justified post's request for a new GSO position. Mission was urged to indicate the ICASS ratio benchmark, which would highlight the need for another GSO. As for the requested additional ISO position, it was suggested that post take a close look at whether this position was still necessary, given that an additional IM position was already in the process of being established. If post still felt the ISO were needed, the Bureau would concur with its remaining in the MSP at this point. Post was cautioned that obtaining either of these new positions would be extremely difficult.

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Submission of Final Copy of FY 2010 MSP  
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¶16. (U) A copy of the reworked MSP must be re-submitted to Washington via RM/SPP's MSP application NLT May 12 for a final, revised version of the document to be posted to the MSP website.  
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